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United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

**Food and  
Nutrition  
Service**

*Office of  
Analysis and  
Evaluation*

# **The Characteristics of Food Stamp Work Registrants: 1984**

## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF FOOD STAMP WORK REGISTRANTS: 1984

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- o In August 1984, work registrants comprised 7.3 percent of the total Food Stamp Program (FSP) caseload.
- o The work registrant population has characteristics that differ from those of the entire FSP recipient population.
  - Work registrants are younger than average adults on the FSP.
  - Work registrants are more likely to be male.
  - Work registrants reside primarily in single-person households or intact families. There are very few single-parent work registrants.
  - Work registrants have shorter certification periods than other recipients. It also appears that work registrants have a higher turnover rate and shorter stays on the FSP than other recipients.
  - Work registrants are less likely to have Aid to Families with Dependent Children income and more likely to have General Assistance income than other recipients.
- o The number of work registrants can be directly affected by Work Incentive Program regulations and implementation.
- o The characteristics of work registrants vary between regions and almost certainly will vary between States.
- o Regulation changes in November 1984 increased the number of work registrants. The data in this report do not reflect the increase.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this paper is the characteristics of Food Stamp Program (FSP) work registrants as reported in the Integrated Quality Control Survey (IQCS) for August 1984. The paper also includes estimates of the effects of changes in work registration requirements subsequent to August 1984 and supplementary data from FSP work demonstrations. Work registrants are those recipients of food stamps who are required to register for employment at the time of application as a condition for receiving food stamps. The types of recipients who must register for work are carefully defined by law and regulation; failure to register or to comply with employment requirements can result in the work registrant's entire household being denied food stamps for up to 2 months. Since work registrants are defined by their characteristics, such as age, it is logical that as a group their characteristics differ from those of the entire FSP population.

The Food Security Act of 1985 created a new Employment and Training Program (ETP) to be implemented April 1987. While the types of authorized work-related activities that could be required of work registrants are broadened by the new law, the basic criteria defining work registrants were not changed. Thus, a description of current work registrants can also serve as a description of the participants in the ETP.

The remainder of this first chapter describes the size of the work registrant population and reviews the criteria for work registration. It describes some of the factors which influence the size of this population.

The second chapter of this paper shows the actual demographic and economic characteristics of work registrants. It contrasts these characteristics with those of the entire FSP population. Another section deals with regional variations among work registrants. The final section of this chapter uses data from FSP demonstrations to show prior employment and other characteristics of the work registrants in these demonstrations. This information is not present in quality control data.

The last chapter uses data from the FSP workfare demonstrations to look at length of FSP participation of work registrants, particularly as contrasted to all food stamp recipients. It also provides information on the number of work registrants estimated for Fiscal Year 1987.

## **1.1 The Size of the Work Registrant Population**

About 1.4 million persons were work registered in August 1984. Table 1 shows the number of FSP recipients and households as well as the number of work registrants and households containing work registrants from the last four IQCS surveys.

The FSP population has grown and ebbed as a reflection, in part, of the national economy. The number and proportion of work registrants are affected not only by the economy, but also by policy changes in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children Program (AFDC). Following a drop of 600,000 work registrants between August 1982 and February 1983, the work registrant pool has remained fairly steady. This one-time drop is related to increased funding for the AFDC work program which is discussed later in more detail. As Table 1 shows, while work registrants are only 7 percent of FSP recipients, they are present in 16 percent, or 1 in 6, of all FSP households (see Exhibit 1). About 19 percent of all work registrant households have more than 1 work registrant.

## **1.2 Food Stamp Registration Requirements**

Current law. Current law concerning work registration defines those expected to work for purposes of Food Stamp Program work requirements. FSP work requirements are directed at able-bodied unemployed persons aged 18 to 59 who are assumed available for work; i.e., caretakers of children younger than 6 and caretakers of disabled persons are assumed unavailable and exempted from work requirements. Heads of household aged 16 or 17 who are not exempt for reasons other than their age must also register for work. There is also an exemption for persons subject to the work requirements of AFDC or unemployment insurance on the assumption that these programs will ensure appropriate work-related activity. There are also exemptions for disability including participation in a drug addiction program, and for students.

Eligibility for optional workfare includes work registrants plus unemployment insurance beneficiaries and inactive WIN registrants.

Work Registration Requirements in August 1984. The majority of this paper shows characteristics of work registrant households as of August 1984. At that time, the law stipulated that the child caretaker exemption was for children under 12; the change to children under 6 was not implemented until November 1984. Also changed in November 1984 was an exemption for a caretaker of any child under 18 as long as another adult in the household was either working or work registered. In addition, 16- and 17-year-old heads of household were made non-exempt from work registration by the 1985 legislation and are not reflected in the August 1984 data.

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**TABLE 1**

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**Number of Recipients and Households in the FSP and  
FSP Work Registrant Recipients and Households**

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(in 000's)

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	<u>August 1982</u>	<u>February 1983</u>	<u>August 1983</u>	<u>August 1984</u>
1. Number of FSP Households	7,487	8,052	7,691	7,296
2. Number of FSP Recipients	20,713	23,924	22,012	20,173
3. Number of Households Containing One or More Work Registrants	1,812	1,232	1,130	1,147
(Percent of All Households) <sup>1</sup>	(24.2)	(15.3)	(14.7)	(15.7)
4. Number of Work Registrants <sup>2</sup>	2,130	1,522	1,326	1,402
(Percent of All Persons) <sup>1</sup>	(10.4)	(6.6)	(6.0)	(7.3)

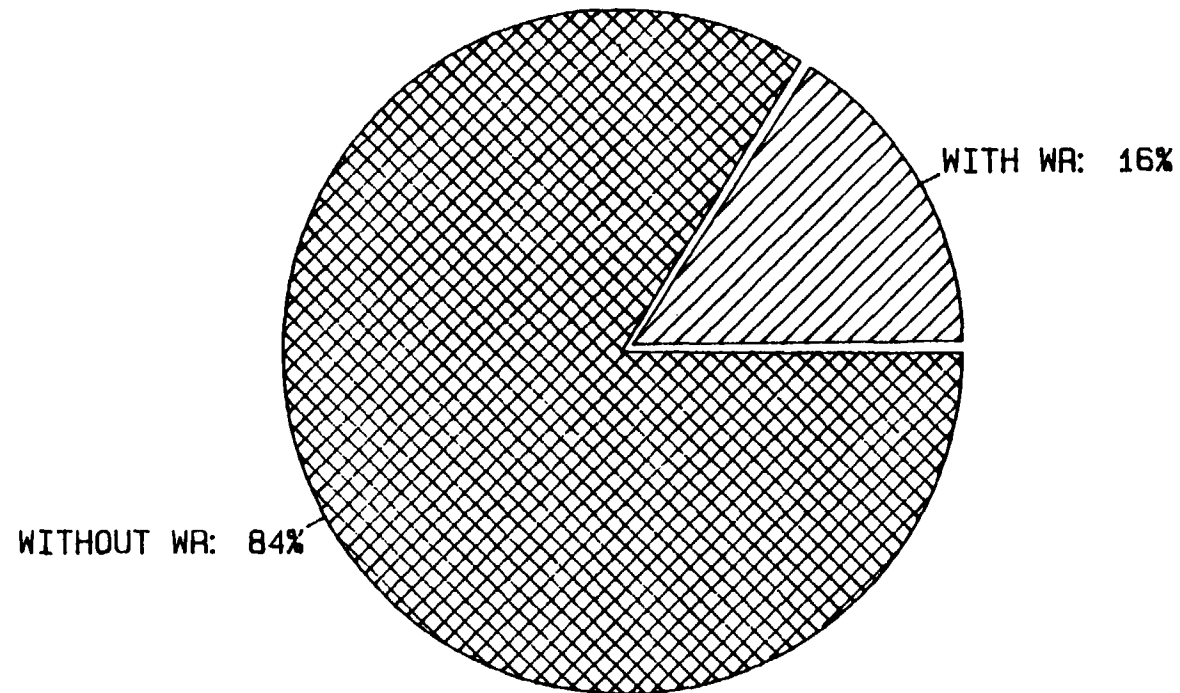
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Sources: August 1982 QC survey  
February 1983 IQCS  
August 1983 IQCS  
August 1984 IQCS

<sup>1</sup>Percent of households and persons with known work registration status.

<sup>2</sup>This is not the total number of recipients contained in work registrant households, only the number of actual work registrants.

EXHIBIT 1  
FSP HOUSEHOLDS WITH AND WITHOUT  
WORK REGISTRANTS AUGUST 1984



SOURCE: AUGUST 1984 IQCS

The caretaker exemption changes were implemented in November 1984 but they were applied to current recipients at the time of recertification. Thus, we estimate that this change was not fully implemented until about August 1985.

### **1.3 Work Registration Exemptions.**

In August 1984 (prior to changes in the caretaker exemption) most recipients were exempt from food stamp work requirements (92.7 percent in total) because of their age (58.1 percent), caretaker status (14.7 percent), and disability (5.5 percent). (See Table 2.) Some were already employed (3.6 percent), and for others deference was given to the work requirements of other programs (AFDC work program 8.0 percent, unemployment insurance 0.7 percent). Exhibit 2 shows the distribution of food stamp recipients by age and work registration status.

### **1.4 Factors Influencing the Number of Work Registrants.**

There are several factors which determine the number of food stamp work registrants. The first factor is the size of the total FSP population which is in turn affected by the general economy. Data derived from the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) study of the effects of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 indicate that for every 1 percent rise in the unemployment rate, there is a corresponding increase of 50,000 FSP participants. However, changes influenced by economic factors such as the unemployment rate may not affect the number of work registrants proportionately. Many of these new participants would not be work registrants but rather members of the unemployed person's household. Further, if the newly unemployed person qualifies for unemployment insurance, he is exempt from work registration.

The second factor concerns the proportion of AFDC recipients who are registered for the AFDC Work Incentive Program (WIN). An AFDC recipient participating in WIN is exempt from FSP work registration. The 1981 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) legislation for AFDC reduced WIN funding; this was reflected in the FSP August 1982 QC survey by a larger number of work registrants. Legislation in 1982 and 1984 restored WIN and WIN demonstration funding. As more AFDC recipients participated in WIN, they no longer were FSP work registrants. These changes are shown in Table 1, but are also clearly illustrated in the change in the number of WIN exemptions in Table 3.

Legislation is the third factor in determining the number of FSP work registrants. Changing the ages of children which serve as the basis of a caretaker exemption, for example, can have substantial effects. August 1984 IQCS data indicate that at that time more than 500,000 recipients were exempted from work registration because 1) they were either the caretaker of a child 12 to 17 in a household where another adult was employed or work registered or 2) they were the caretaker of a child aged 6 to 11. If all these people became work registered when the October 1984 regulations removed these bases of exemption and they were not exempt for other reasons, there would be a substantial increase in the number of work registrants. The effects of the change would be smaller to the extent these persons were also eligible for another exemption such as WIN participation.



**TABLE 2**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS BY WORK REGISTRATION STATUS**

Work Registration Status	Number of Participants (000)	Percent of Participants <sup>d</sup>
Required to register for work	1,402	7.3
Exempt from work registration:	17,828	92.7
Less than 18	9,549	49.7
Disabled or Elderly	2,670	13.9
WIN participant	1,547	8.0
Caretaker of child or incapacitated adult <sup>a</sup>	2,832	14.7
Recipient of Unemployment Insurance (UI)	135	0.7
Participant in drug addition or alcoholic treatment program	38	0.2
Employed full-time <sup>b</sup>	684	3.6
Student <sup>c</sup>	373	1.9
Unknown	943	—
Total	20,173	100.0

Source: August 1984 IQCS

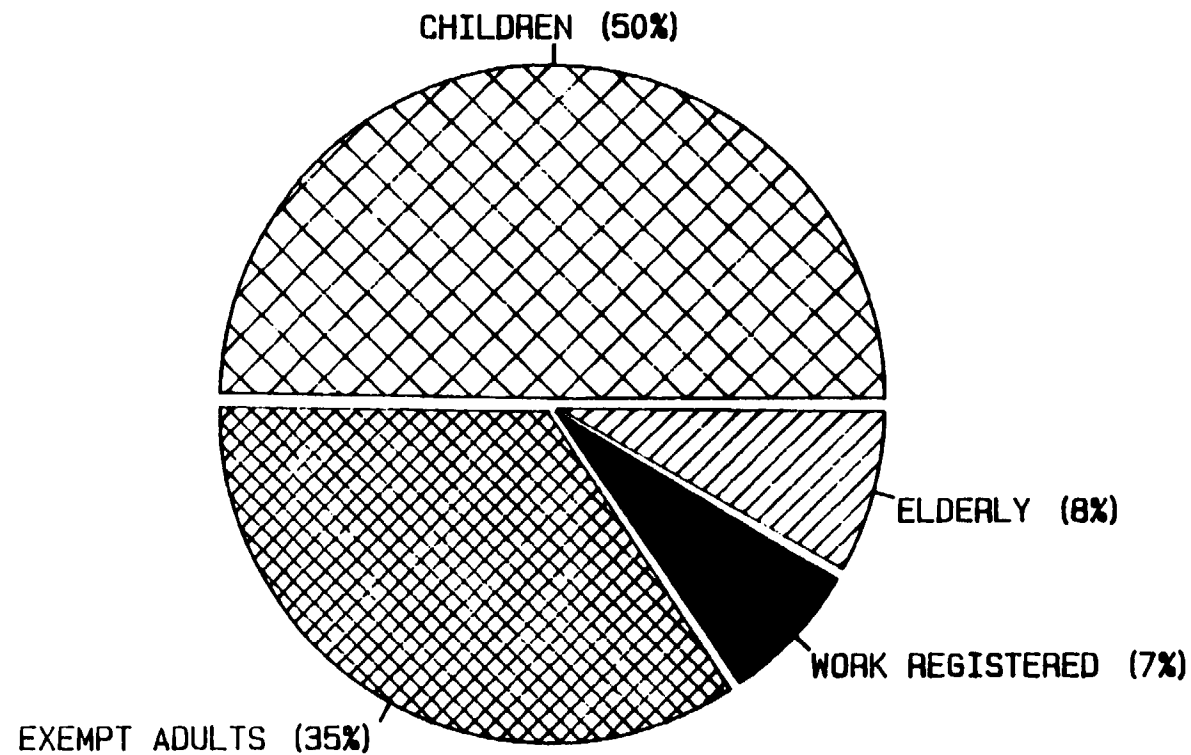
<sup>a</sup>Includes both caretakers of children under 12 and caretakers of children under 18 where another able-bodied parent is registered for work or exempted because of employment.

<sup>b</sup>Employed at least 30 hours per week or receiving weekly earnings equal to or greater than the Federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours.

<sup>c</sup>Enrolled at least half-time in a recognized school, training program, or institution of higher education.

<sup>d</sup>Percent of those with known work registration status.

**EXHIBIT 2**  
**FSP RECIPIENTS BY AGE AND WORK REGISTRATION**  
**STATUS AUGUST 1984**



**TABLE 3**  
**Distribution of Non-Elderly Adult Food Stamp Recipients**  
**(Ages 18-59)**  
**by Work Registration and Exemption Status<sup>a/</sup>**

	August 1982	February 1983	August 1984
Required to register for work	24.8%	15.7%	17.9%
Exempt	75.2	84.3	82.1
Disabled	13.4	9.5	13.6
WIN Participant	6.9	20.3	19.7
Caretaker of child or incapacitated adult	42.2	38.1	36.1
Recipient of unemployment insurance	3.1	3.8	1.7
Participant in drug addiction or alcoholic treatment program	0.2	0.2	0.5
Employed full time	8.1	7.1	8.7
Student	1.2	5.2	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: August 1984 IQCS.

<sup>a/</sup> Percent of those with known work registration status.

## 2. CHARACTERISTICS OF WORK REGISTRANT HOUSEHOLDS

Work registrants differ in their characteristics from other FSP recipients. These differences result from the requirements for work registration. For example, work registrants are younger, on average, than all adult FSP recipients because all elderly recipients are exempt from work registration. On the other hand, there is also diversity among work registrants. Although on average, work registrants are young adults, over one-third of them are aged 40 or older and 16 percent are older than age 50 (see Table 4).

Work registrants are predominately male (61 percent). This also is a result of the work registration rules; the child caretaker exemption makes it more likely that females will be exempt from work registration.

### 2.1 Family Composition of Work Registrants

Table 5 contrasts some of the household characteristics of work registrant households with all FSP households. The average household size is similar (see also Table 6) and the average benefit is larger, although less so when adjusted for household size differences. Approximately 10 percent of all work registrant households contain an elderly person.

A major difference between work registrant and all FSP households is the extent and nature of their child care responsibilities (see also Table 7). A smaller proportion of work registrant households contain children (49 percent vs. 61 percent for all households) and these households with children are less likely to be single-parent households.<sup>1</sup> Ten percent of work registrant households compared to 38 percent of all FSP households are single-parent households. Among work registrants households with children, more than 80 percent contain two parents.

These differences occur for several reasons. First, single-parent households with young children are exempt from work requirements by both AFDC and the FSP. Second, many single-parent households with older children receive AFDC and are enrolled in WIN which exempts them from FSP work registration. As a result of both these factors only 4 percent of single-parent food stamp households contain a work registrant. Third, there is a substantial number of single person households (aged 18-59) who receive food stamps (1,256,000) and a high proportion of these are work registered (30.5 percent). One third of all work registrant households contain one person; most are males (see Table 8).

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<sup>1</sup>Single parents were defined as households containing children with only one person aged 18 or older in the household; households with children containing more than one adult were considered 2-parent households.

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**TABLE 4**

Percentage Distribution by Age of FSP  
Work Registrants

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Age	Percentage
Under 20	11.1
20-29	33.3
30-39	22.0
40-49	17.7
50-59	15.5
60+	0.4
Total	100.0

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Source: August 1984 IQCS

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**TABLE 5**

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Family Composition Characteristics  
of Work Registrant Households  
and All FSP Households

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	<u>Work Registrant Households</u>	<u>All FSP Households</u>
Average Household Size	3.0	2.8
Average Household Benefit	\$143	\$114
Average Certification Length	7.4 months	8.9 months
% With Elderly	10.5	22.1
% With Children	49.0	61.0
% Single Parent Households <sup>1</sup>	9.8	37.6

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Source: August 1984 IQCS

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<sup>1</sup>Single parents were defined as households containing children with only one person aged 18 or older in the household; households with children containing more than one adult were considered 2-parent households.

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**TABLE 6**

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**Distribution of Households by Size**

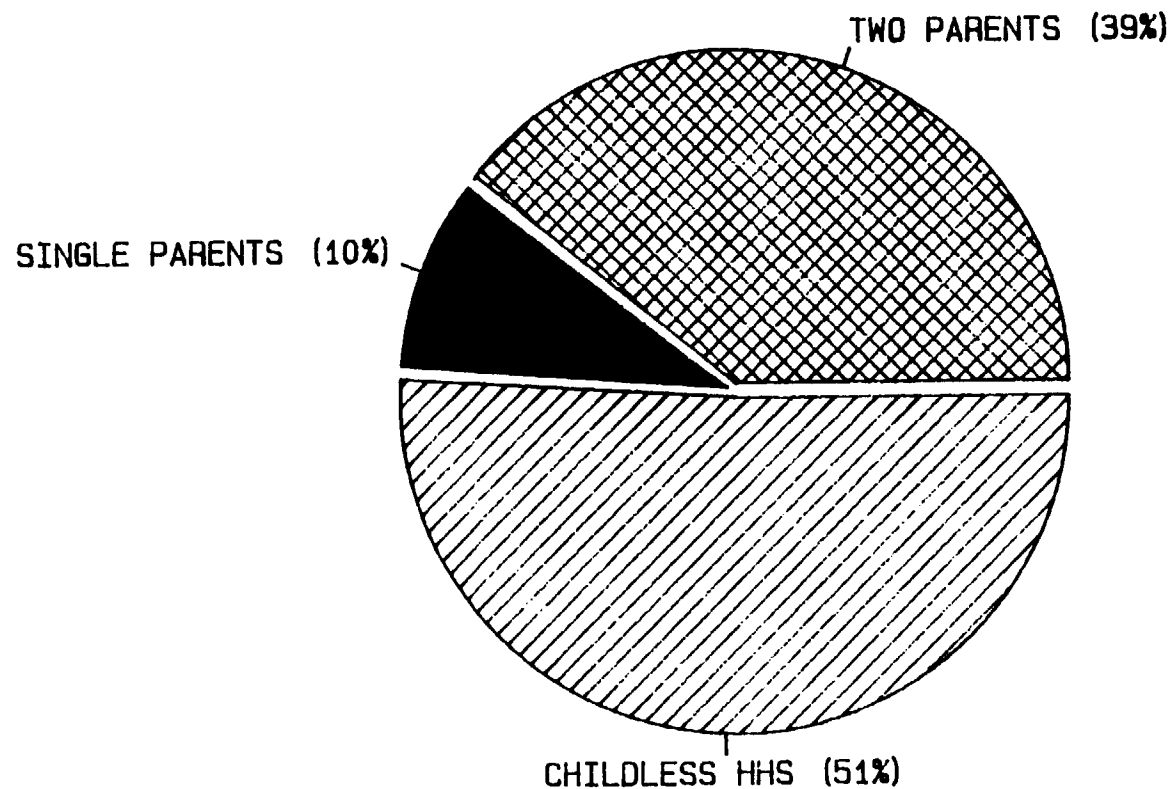
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<u>Household Size</u> <u>(%)</u>	<u>Work Registrant</u> <u>Households</u>	<u>All FSP</u> <u>Households</u>
1	33.5%	32.2%
2	17.6%	19.4%
3	12.5%	17.6%
4	14.1%	14.3%
5	10.2%	8.6%
6	4.6%	4.3%
7+	7.5%	3.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

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Source: August 1984 IQCS

EXHIBIT 3  
FSP WORK REGISTRANT HOUSEHOLDS BY  
HOUSEHOLD TYPE AUGUST 1984



NOTE: SINGLE PARENTS ARE DEFINED AS HHS CON-  
TAINING CHILDREN WITH ONLY ONE PERSON OVER 18  
SOURCE: AUGUST 1984 IQCS



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**TABLE 7****Work Registrant Households with Children  
by Family Status and Age of Children**

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Age of Children	Single- Parent <sup>1</sup>	Two-Parent Household	Total
<hr/>			
Under 6 Only	1.1%	22.7%	23.8%
6-11 Only	1.4%	7.6%	9.0%
12-17 Only	10.1%	13.4%	23.5%
More than One Category	6.1%	37.5%	43.7%
Total	18.8%*	81.2%	100.0%

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Source: August 1984 IQCS

\*Note: This percentage differs from the 9.8 percent mentioned in the text because this table shows only work registrants with children.

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<sup>1</sup>Single parents were defined as households containing children with only one person aged 18 or older in the household; households with children containing more than one adult were considered 2-parent households.

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**TABLE 8****Work Registrant Characteristics  
by Household Types**

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	Work Registrants in Single Person Households	Work Registrants in Childless Households Containing 2 or More Persons	Work Registrants in Households With Children	All Work Registrants
Percent Male	66.7%	48.3%	63.1%	60.7%
Average Age	37 years	34 years	32 years	34 years
Percent with Earnings <sup>1</sup>	12.9%	32.6%	34.6%	27.0%

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Source: August 1984 IQCS

<sup>1</sup>These are the earnings of the household, not necessarily the work registrant.

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## 2.2 Income Sources of Work Registrants

### Earnings

The percent of work registrant households with earnings is higher than that of other FSP households (see Table 9). Although only 15.5 percent of all work registrants have earnings, other members of their households also have earnings, so that 27.0 percent of all work registrant households have some earnings. (It is possible to be registered for work even if one has earnings because the employment exemption for work registration uses the criterion of either employed for 30 or more hours per week or earning the equivalent of 30 hours per week at the Federal minimum wage.)

### AFDC

A much smaller percentage of work registrant households than of all households receive AFDC income. This is due to the exemption for being a WIN registrant. Table 10 shows that AFDC households with work registration are predominately registered for work under WIN rather than under the FSP. As noted earlier, this fact also explains the low proportion of single parents among FSP work registrants.

Exhibit 4 shows the number of AFDC/FSP households by WIN/FSP work registration status for 3 years. Both the number and proportion of AFDC households with WIN registration were higher in 1983 and 1984 than in 1982 (1,004,000 households (33.5 percent) in August 1984 vs. 438,000 households (12 percent) in August 1982). If WIN funding should drop again as it did in 1982, there could be more FSP work registrants. If there had been no WIN registrations in Fiscal Year 1984 and no WIN registered AFDC/FSP recipients were eligible for other exemptions, the number of FSP work registrants would have more than doubled (2,949,000 vs. 1,402,000 in Fiscal Year 1982). In actuality, there were about 600,000 more work registrants in 1982 than in 1983 and 1984 due in large part to lower funding in Fiscal Year 1982 (see Table 1). Conversely, if WIN funding and coverage should dramatically increase, there would be a drop in the number of work registrant households with AFDC. However, there would still be AFDC households with FSP work registrants. Not everyone in an FSP household with AFDC income is in the AFDC unit. Those persons outside the unit are not eligible for WIN and, unless they have another exemption, should already be FSP work registered and would not be affected by a change in AFDC policy.

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**TABLE 9****Income Sources of Work Registrant Households  
and All FSP Households**

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	<u>Work Registrant Households</u>	<u>All FSP Households</u>
Percent of Households with Earnings (Average Amount)	27.0 (\$417)	19.3 (\$468)
Percent of Households with AFDC (Average Amount)	20.4 (\$292)	41.8 (\$342)
Percent of Households with GA (Average Amount)	18.5 (\$192)	11.5 (\$188)

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Source: August 1984 IQCS

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**TABLE 10**

All FSP Households Receiving AFDC Income  
by Age of Youngest Child and Work Registration Status

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	<u>Under 6</u>	<u>6-11</u>	<u>12-17</u>	<u>Total</u>
FSP Work Registered	4.0%	1.7%	1.8%	7.5%
WIN Registered (No FSP Work Registration)	12.1%	14.1%	7.3%	33.5%
Not Registered	44.5%	10.2%	4.3%	59.0%
Total	60.6%	26.0%	13.4%	100.0%

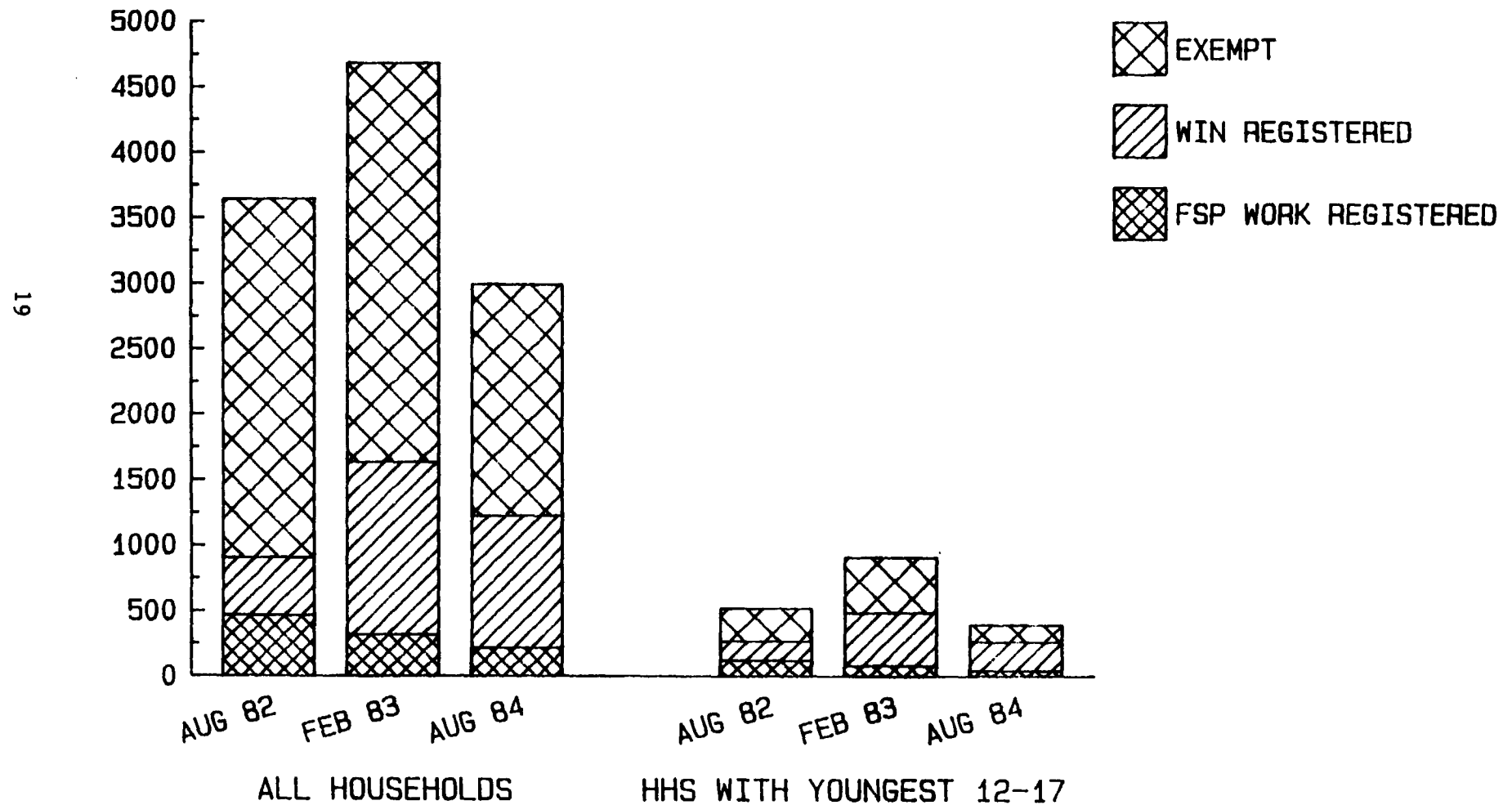
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Source: August 1984 IQCS

# EXHIBIT 4

## WIN AND FSP WORK REGISTRATION AMONG FSP HOUSEHOLDS WITH AFDC INCOME

HOUSEHOLDS (IN THOUSANDS)



SOURCES: AUGUST 1982 QC SURVEY, FEBRUARY 1983  
AND AUGUST 1984 IQCS

## **2.3 Work Registrants by Region**

The next three tables (Tables 11, 12, and 13) show how the characteristics of work registrants vary by FNS administrative region. The number of work registrants in each region is related to the number of FSP recipients in each region. However, the proportion of recipients who are work registered and their characteristics do vary. Table 11 shows characteristics of work registrants, while Tables 12 and 13 show characteristics of work registrant households. Regional differences in the number of work registrants and their characteristics such as sex and household composition can reflect such factors as local economies, AFDC participation levels, and rates of WIN registration.

Table 13 also reveals other regional variations from national averages. Although 18.5 percent of the national work registrants have General Assistance (GA) income nationwide, two regions had close to 50 percent of their work registrants receiving GA income, and two regions had less than 1 percent of their work registrants with GA income. The regional differences reflected in these tables suggest that there may be similar variances among the States in work registrant characteristics.

**TABLE 11****Characteristics of FSP Work  
Registrants by Region**

Region	Percent of Total FSP Recipients	Percent of Total Work Registrants	Percent Female	Percent Nonwhite	Percent Over 45
Mid-Atlantic	13.2	10.8	40.8	43.6	24.9
Northeast	13.0	9.6	50.4	52.2	34.0
Southeast	21.4	24.2	40.0	56.4	24.2
Western	12.7	10.0	38.8	32.5	15.9
Southwest	12.4	16.1	40.5	67.5	27.2
Midwest	21.4	20.6	28.3	52.1	17.5
Mountain Plains	5.8	8.7	38.5	24.9	17.8
Total U.S.	100.0	100.0	38.5	50.0	22.9

Source: August 1984 IQCS.



**TABLE 12****Household Composition of Work Registrant Households by Region**

	Percent Single Person Households	Percent Childless Households, Not Single Persons	Percent Households With Children	Average Household Size	Average Length of Certification
Mid-Atlantic	35.2	25.7	39.1 <sup>1</sup>	2.9	6.9 months
Northeast	49.8	4.0	46.2	2.8	6.9 months
Southeast	17.1	23.1	59.8	3.6	6.2 months
Western	38.4	21.5	40.1	2.5	7.7 months
Southwest	18.6	17.2	64.2	3.7	8.3 months
Midwest	52.9	15.4	31.7	2.3	8.1 months
Mountain Plains	29.2	17.6	53.2	3.2	7.7 months
Total U.S.	33.5	17.5	49.0	3.0	7.4 months

Source: August 1984 IQCS.

<sup>1</sup>The first 3 columns in each row sum to 100 percent.

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**TABLE 13****Income Sources of Work Registrant Households by Region**

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	Percent with Earnings	Percent with AFDC	Percent with GA	Average Benefit
<hr/>				
Mid-Atlantic	18.4	25.9	18.4	\$136
Northeast	25.4	16.1	50.7	\$124
Southeast	33.6	27.6	0.4	\$170
Western	23.7	20.6	4.0	\$123
Southwest	32.5	12.4	0.8	\$177
Midwest	19.3	17.2	47.2	\$112
Mountain Plains	34.0	22.7	6.4	\$144
Total U.S.	27.0	20.4	18.5	\$143

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Source: August 1984 IQCS

## **2.4 Characteristics of FSP Work Registrants from Other Data Sources.**

There have been several work registration and workfare demonstrations involving FSP work registrants which can provide additional information on their characteristics. These include the first and second rounds of the Work Registration and Job Search Demonstration which occurred between October 1981 and March 1983 and between October 1982 and June 1984, respectively, and the two rounds of Workfare Demonstrations, the latest of which occurred in 1981. For purposes of this report, characteristics data from these demonstrations have two limitations: the data are less recent than provided by the August 1984 IQCS Survey and, since the demonstrations were conducted at selected sites, the data are not nationally representative. Information from these sources, however, is useful for examining characteristics of work registrants that are not contained in the QC surveys.

An important finding from both demonstrations is that many FSP work registrants have existing job skills. This is shown in the number with recent employment. Of those participating in the first round of the Work Registration and Job Search Demonstration, about 70 percent had worked sometime during the prior year. This percentage was 58 percent in the second round of the demonstration. In the second round of the Workfare Demonstration, about 70 percent of all participants had worked in the year prior to participating in the demonstration. However, there still remains a large percentage of demonstration participants without recent employment.

Table 14 shows the characteristics of the participants and comparison group for the second phase of the Work Registration/Job Search Demonstration. Both the treatment group and control group were composed of a sample of FSP work registrants taken in 1983.

Table 15 shows the characteristics of the demonstration and comparison groups from the second set of Workfare Demonstration Projects. These two groups were also a sample of FSP work registrants in 1981.

Looking at these two tables, it is clear that the characteristics of the majority of participants in both demonstrations are similar. The tables also show, however, the diversity of the demonstration participants. While over half of the workfare participants had 12 years of school, for example, a significant proportion had 8 years or less.

**TABLE 14**

Characteristics of Analysis Samples of Participants  
by Experimental Status

Characteristics	Treatment Group	Control Group
Mean Members in Household	3.3	3.3
Percent 1 Person Households	17.0	16.5
2 Person Households	26.9	24.4
5+ Person Households	22.1	22.8
Sex, Marital Status (in percent)		
Men	49.7	52.7
Married Men	18.2	20.1
Married Women	14.3	14.3
Unmarried Men	31.5	32.7
Unmarried Women	36.0	32.9
Percent White	51.1	54.2
Mean Members Under Age 18	1.1	1.1
Mean Age of Registrants	35.2	34.8
Mean Years of Schooling	10.4	10.6
Percent of Registrants in School (Full or Part Time)	6.8	6.4
Percent Who Worked at All in 1982	56.7	58.1
Mean Earnings in 1982	\$2847	\$3087
Weeks Worked as Percent of All Weeks in 1982	33.8	35.9
During 3 Months Prior to Application		
Percent Who Worked	40.9	41.7
Percent Who Received Food Stamps	51.2	53.8
Percent Who Received Welfare Income	24.2	23.4
Mean Food Stamp Income	\$202	\$195
Mean Respondent Earnings	\$369	\$441
Mean Total Income	\$1500	\$1616

Source: Final Report—Food Stamp Work Registration and Job Search Demonstration

**TABLE 15**

**Characteristics and Experience of the Workfare  
and Comparison Samples, by Sex  
(Percent and Average)**

Characteristic	<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>	
	Demonstration	Comparison	Demonstration	Comparison
<b>PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS</b>				
Age at Referral				
Under 20 years	9.8	6.7	17.3	13.2
20-29	47.8	49.3	37.8	45.5
30-39	27.5	23.2	11.0	15.4
40+	15.0	20.9	33.9	26.0
Average	29.8	31.1	33.2	31.6
Years of Education				
0-8 years	12.4	21.8	11.4	18.1
9-11	29.4	24.8	35.1	33.2
12+	58.3	53.4	53.5	48.7
Average	11.1	11.1	11.0	10.9
Number of Persons in Households in the Referral Month <sup>a</sup>				
1	28.9	24.8	35.1	27.9
2	21.0	22.4	32.3	27.9
3	21.3	21.1	14.4	20.3
4	11.7	15.8	8.9	10.1
5	8.8	6.9	4.6	5.5
6+	8.1	9.0	4.5	8.4
Average	2.8	3.0	2.4	2.7
Race				
White	71.3	71.1	67.8	62.2
Black	18.0	10.3	24.3	17.4
Other	9.0	11.9	6.0	14.1
Unknown	1.8	6.7	1.9	6.4
<b>EXPERIENCE DURING THE BASELINE YEAR</b>				
Average Monthly Household Food Stamp Allotment in Year Prior to the Referral Month <sup>a</sup>				
\$0	40.8	49.8	29.6	45.2
\$1-70	44.9	39.2	57.5	41.4
\$71-140	8.5	4.0	8.0	6.1
\$141-210	3.6	4.5	3.5	4.1
\$211-280	1.7	1.6	1.0	0.4
\$281+	0.5	0.9	0.4	2.9
Average	\$31.31	\$27.96	\$36.85	\$36.49

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**TABLE 15 (Continued)**

Characteristics and Experience of the Workfare  
and Comparison Samples, by Sex  
(Percent and Average)

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Characteristic	<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>	
	Demonstration	Comparison	Demonstration	Comparison
<hr/>				
Average Monthly Earnings in the Year Prior to the Referral Month <sup>a</sup>				
\$0	20.5	21.6	47.0	36.4
\$1-100	11.4	16.0	13.1	12.4
\$101-200	8.2	5.5	10.8	4.1
\$201-300	8.6	7.6	9.9	16.1
\$301-400	5.8	7.0	4.6	8.9
\$401-500	8.6	9.1	5.4	5.9
\$500+	36.8	33.3	9.3	16.2
Average	\$546	\$536	\$149	\$233

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Source: Draft Final Report of the Second Set of Food Stamp Workfare  
Demonstration Projects

<sup>a</sup>Referral month is month of referral to Workfare for demonstration group,  
and month that work registration form was completed for the comparison group.

### **3. PATTERNS OF PARTICIPATION OF WORK REGISTRANTS**

#### **3.1 Characteristics Associated with Program Duration**

The Workfare Demonstration data have an advantage over the IQCS data since the Workfare Demonstration has information on participants over several months. Although it appears that the work registrants in the demonstration were more likely to be male and somewhat older than work registrants in 1984, the workfare data provide insight into factors affecting turnover.

The Workfare Demonstration data indicate that certain characteristics of participants can change the probabilities of their being long- or short-term recipients. The most relevant characteristic is recent work experience (see Table 16). Those who left workfare quickly (1 to 4 months) had more than twice the work experience in the 9 months before being referred to workfare as those who remained in workfare 6 or more months. On average, persons who left workfare after 1 to 4 months had work experience in about half the months before referral. Those who remained in workfare for 6 months had worked in about a quarter of the pre-referral months.

The relationship between work experience and length of stay held for both males and females although women had worked less in the pre-program period. Table 17 indicates that factors such as age, education, and race were also related to the length of participants' stay in the demonstration. As the table shows, those who remained on the program for a longer period of time differed from those who left during the first 3 months. A larger percentage of those on the FSP for 6 or more months were female, non-white, older, and/or had less education than those active from 1 to 3 months. Education appears to be the most important of these factors; 10 percent of those who left workfare in the first month had 8 or fewer years of schooling, but 17 percent of those remaining 6 or more months had this level of education.

#### **3.2 Turnover and Duration of FSP Participation**

It appears that work registrants remain on the FSP for a shorter length of time and have faster turnover than all FSP recipients. As discussed below, this pattern is deduced from IQCS information using indirect measures of duration.

There are no adequate sources of information for estimating length of FSP participation and turnover. Although the demonstrations tracked participants over time in some sites, the available data followed participation for no more than a year. This is insufficient to measure length of stay for recipients on the FSP beyond this period. The major limitation of IQCS data is that it provides only point-in-time information for each year. However, proxy measures of benefit duration can be derived from IQCS data on 1) certification length and 2) the proportion of work registrants who are in the first month of an initial certification period.

**Table 16**

Length of Stay in Workfare  
by Sex and Proportion of Months Worked  
During Pre-Program Period

Proportion of Months Working During Pre-Program Period	Number of Months Subject to Workfare Requirements					
	1	2	3	4	5	6+
Total	47.3%	57.0%	49.3%	49.0%	36.9%	24.9%
Sex						
Male	54.0	63.5	56.8	58.1	45.1	30.0
Female	33.2	38.5	30.6	16.6	26.0	16.9

Source: Draft Final Report of the Second Set of Food Stamp Workfare  
Demonstration Projects.



**Table 17**

**Length of Stay By Selected Characteristics  
of Workfare Participants in Workfare Demonstration Sites**

Participant Characteristics	Number of Months Subject to Workfare Requirements						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6+	
<b>Sex</b>							
Male	68.4%	69.3%	69.3%	65.7%	63.1%	64.3%	66.0%
Female	31.6	30.7	34.3	34.3	36.9	35.7	33.3
<b>Age</b>							
Less than 20	10.7	10.9	10.4	11.2	10.1	10.3	12.3
20-29	47.5	47.6	46.4	45.2	43.2	38.9	44.5
30-39	21.8	22.4	22.5	22.3	20.8	19.6	22.0
40+	19.9	19.2	20.6	21.1	26.0	31.2	21.3
<b>Years of School Completed</b>							
0-8	10.3	12.4	12.5	14.3	14.5	17.2	12.1
9-11	27.7	28.7	33.0	32.8	31.5	30.9	31.3
12+	62.0	58.9	54.5	52.9	54.0	51.9	56.7
<b>Race</b>							
White	74.9	76.5	72.3	67.6	64.7	60.4	70.1
Nonwhite	25.1	23.5	27.7	32.4	35.3	39.6	29.9

Source: Draft Final Report of the Second Set of Food Stamp Workfare  
Demonstration Projects.

### Length of Certification

The average length of certification reflects in part the expected length of program participation at the time of certification. The average length of certification is 7.4 months for work registrants compared to 8.9 months for all FSP participants (August 1984 IQCS). However, this is a weak measure for looking at benefit duration because other administrative reasons affect certification length and for participants whose certification is renewed, length of stay is understated.

### Length of Stay

Length of stay and turnover rates can be estimated from IQCS data on the number of work registrants in their first month of FSP participation. (IQCS only provides information on whether a work registrant is in a first month of an initial certification or in either a subsequent month or a renewed certification. Information on the number of months since initial participation is not available.) An estimate of average length of stay can be obtained by dividing the number of all work registrants by the number in their first month.<sup>1</sup>

Across August 1983 and August 1984, 12.3 percent of work registrants were in their first month of receipt; this implies average continuous food stamp receipt of 8.1 months for work registrants ( $1.00 \text{ divided by } .123 = 8.1$ ). (An average of the last two surveys was used since August 1984 appears to have a low number of new work registrants per month when compared to the last four surveys.)

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<sup>1</sup>This method is based on the assumption that the number of work registrants in each month is constant. That is, the number of work registrants that are new each month equals the number leaving. Further, for the replacement rate to equal the exit rate, the length of stay of registrants leaving in a particular month must be the same as the expected length of stay of registrants entering. It is assumed, therefore, that, on the average, length of duration is the same for new, ongoing and exiting work registrants in each month. To illustrate this, assume that 1/3 of new work registrants remain on the program for 1 month, 1/3 for 2 months, and 1/3 for three months. Looking at one particular month, for every new registrant who will remain 2 months, there is a registrant receiving a second month of benefits. Similarly, in this month, for every new registrant who will remain 3 months, there is a registrant receiving a second month of benefits and another registrant receiving a third month of benefits. Thus, for three new work registrants, there are three registrants carried over from the previous month. Dividing the total number of registrants that month by the number of new work registrants yields an average length of stay of 2 months. This is the same average length of stay that can be derived from knowing the distribution of the duration of food stamp receipt. In the absence of data on the distribution of length of stay, this method allows the calculation of average length of stay from the ratio of all work registrants to new work registrants.

### Turnover

Turnover is the ratio of the number of different persons who are food stamp work registrants during the year to the number of work registrants in any month. The number of different work registrants over the course of the year is the sum of all new work registrants each month and the number whose participation began in the previous year (i.e., carried over).

For August 1983 to August 1984, the turnover ratio is estimated as 2.4. This factor is derived from the sum of 12 months of new work registrants (12.3 percent of the August monthly average times 12 months) and all carryover work registrants (87.7 percent of the monthly average) or  $(.123 \times 12) + .877$ .

A turnover factor of 2.4 for the work registrant population when compared to a previously calculated turnover rate of 1.7 for all food stamp recipients (based on data from the 1979 Income Survey Development Program) demonstrates that work registrants enter and leave the FSP more quickly than the general food stamp population.